United Nations A/68/877–S/2014/334

General Assembly
Security Council

Distr.: General
14 May 2014
English
Original: Arabic

General Assembly
Sixty-eighth session
Agenda item 110
Measures to eliminate international terrorism

Security Council
Sixty-ninth year

Identical letters dated 12 May 2014 from the Permanent Representative of the Syrian Arab Republic to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

For nine days, armed terrorist groups have imposed an immoral blockade in an act of collective punishment against the city of Aleppo. They have completely cut off the supply of clean and drinkable water from the city's 3 million inhabitants, who have rejected their presence in the city and their crimes against its population.

The terrorists have prevented the pumping of water from the Sulayman al-Halabi station, which is the main source of drinkable water for Aleppo city. As a result, water has been cut off from all areas of the city for the ninth day in a row. Water has been redirected into the Quwayq river and wasted in order to deny the civilians access to clean water. That situation has caused an acute crisis in water access. Civilians have been forced to look for water from any available source, including rivers and other sources of non-drinkable water. The lives and health of the civilian population are at stake. If these conditions prevail, contagious diseases will proliferate and children will be exposed to a range of threats. The Syrian Government and the city authorities have been making significant efforts, using every available means, to provide alternatives for some of the inhabitants' water needs. However, those emergency measures are not sustainable given the considerable needs of a city of the size of Aleppo.

The withholding of water from Aleppo as a collective punishment should be added to the list of crimes that the armed groups have committed against the city's inhabitants, crimes that have been continuous over the last few months. Residential areas have been subjected to indiscriminate mortar and missile fire on a daily basis, killing dozens of people and injuring hundreds more. Supply lines to the city have been cut off for long stretches of time in order to hold back food and medical necessities. The entire city has been deprived of water and electricity repeatedly and at length.

14-53423 (E) 190514 200514

Please recycle

These crimes against Syrian civilians, including collective punishment and such systematic acts of terrorism as killings, abductions, torture, starvation and destruction, have taken place in full view of the United Nations and with the direct support of those States that are involved in shedding Syrian blood. However, there has been no clear condemnation or genuine effort to bring an end to the crimes or violations. It is shameful that the United Nations and other purported international humanitarian organizations have kept silent before these crimes and the humanitarian disaster in Aleppo. At the same time, whenever the Syrian State is held responsible for an incident, certain United Nations officials beat their breasts and lose no time in calling for meetings of the Security Council and other international forums, all in the name of concern for the humanitarian conditions of Syrians and the situation of human rights in Syria.

Certain United Nations actors persist in ignoring the terrorists' responsibility for the emergence and growth of the humanitarian burden in Syria. Their approach to the situation is selective and politicized, and does not fulfil the required standards of neutrality and impartiality. That state of affairs encourages the armed terrorist groups to persist in their crimes with direct support and political cover from the States that have Syrian blood on their hands.

The Government of the Syrian Arab Republic wishes to bring these facts to the attention of the Security Council. It hopes that the Council will genuinely condemn those crimes and take immediate measures to place pressure on the State sponsors of terrorism in Syria to bring an end to the daily crimes of the armed terrorist groups and their backers against the population of Aleppo city and Syrian civilians in general.

I should be grateful if the present letter could be issued as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 110, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Bashar **Ja'afari**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative